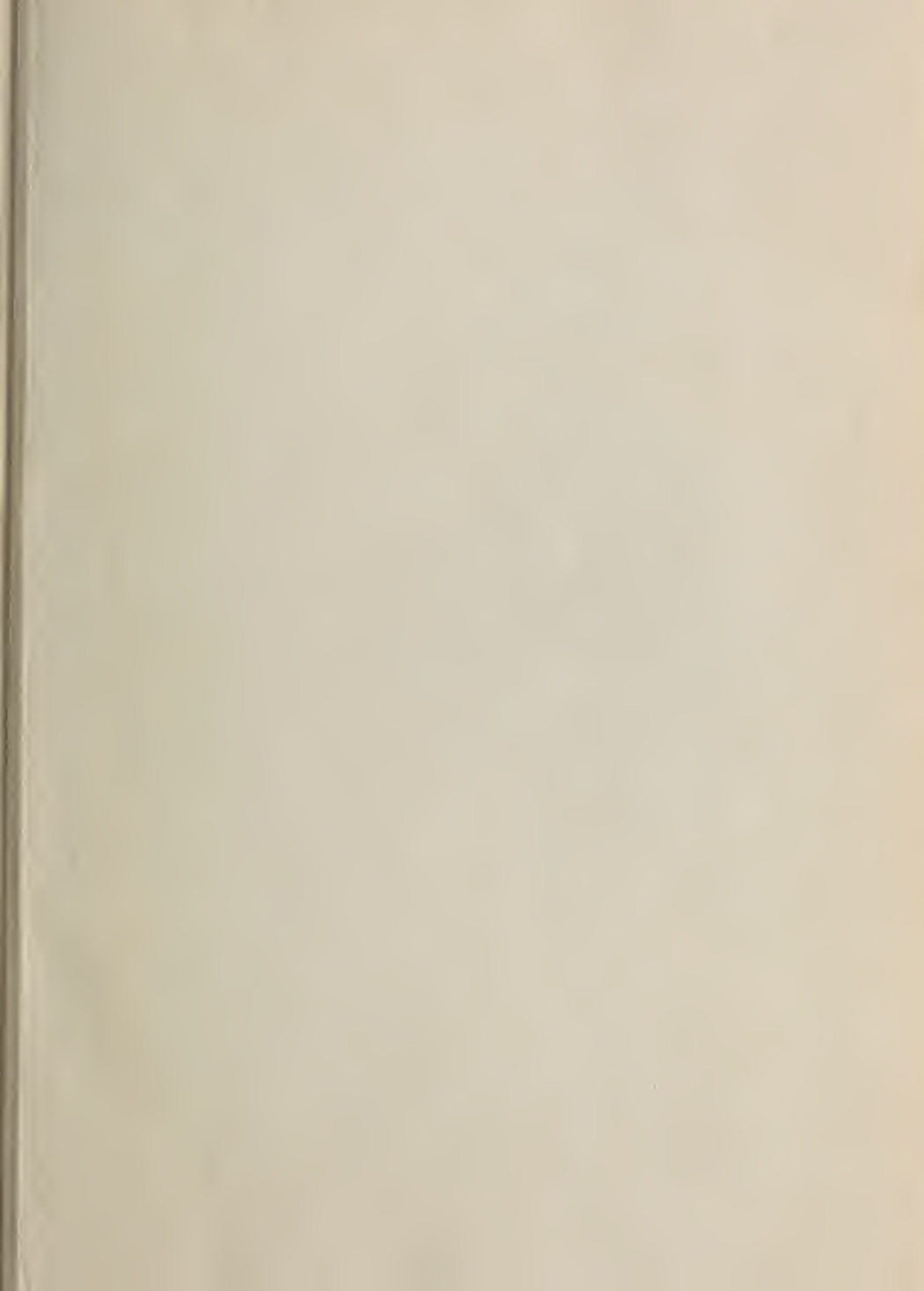


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# Neglected Arabia



Missionary Letters and News

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

THE ARABIAN MISSION



Number Forty-eight, October-December, 1903

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# Missionary Letters and News from Arabia

October—December, 1903

A NEW YEAR'S APPEAL.

REV. JAMES CANTINE.



This is the season of the year when many commercial enterprises take an inventory of stock on hand, note its relation to the probable demands of the future, and make plans to supply whatever deficiency exists. It may not be amiss to treat missions in Arabia on the same lines, and with our reports of work done, to take a look over the field as a whole, noting our responsibilities, and our plans for

meeting them.

As a country Arabia is not so well known as many, and the relation which as a mission we bear to it should be thoroughly understood. Speaking generally, we hold the entire eastern side of that vast peninsula; our river and coast line reaching as far as from Maine to Florida. It is true that as yet the extent of our actual possessions is in length rather than breadth, but that is so with most countries settled from the sea. The strip of sea-coast under responsible government is not wide, seldom reaching to two hundred miles, and generally much less. This we are constantly crossing and recrossing with our Bibles and our teaching, stopping only when we come to that vast desert, inhabited only by wandering tribes, which stretches over so large a part of Central Arabia.

Our boundaries then are as well defined as the political and physical geography of this partially explored country will allow—the sea to the east and south, our brethren of the English mission to the north, and all Arabia to the west. Although large, our field can easily be worked from our three stations, Busrah, Bahrein and Muscat, which Providence led us to occupy so early in our history.

It should be remembered that we are the only mission in all this country, and except at Busrah, where we come in contact with the old and debased Oriental churches, we are the sole representatives of Christianity. There is no present likelihood that we will ever be asked to share our responsibilities with any other Protestant body, and there is none upon whom we might place it if we would. Our only missionary neighbors are at Baghdad, and from their beginning they have looked for their extension to the north rather than the south. Humanly speaking, all the eastern part of Arabia and as much of the central part as we can reach, is dependent upon us for its hope of the Gospel. The only other resource is in what might be done by the Bible Societies working alone.

This, then, is *our field*. Of course, its importance is not to be estimated by its extent alone, and certainly its population is relatively less per square mile than most mission fields; but as being a definite conquest by the forces of Christendom of part of the sacred soil of Arabia—as forming a strip of country dividing the great Mohammedan world—as being on the route of so much Arab pilgrimage and travel—it behoves us who hold it to also *occupy* it.

What force is necessary in order to thoroughly man our Arabian mission? It should be recognized right here that our conditions are rather peculiar and may call for a larger proportion of foreign missionaries than some other fields. Our work must everywhere be under constant oversight. It is new, and possibilities are yet but partially understood and tested. The ruling powers are either actively or passively hostile, and are kept in check only by a fear of, or deference to, foreigners. And again,



it may be a long time before our staff of native assistants is even largely made up of converts from the Mohammedan populations, among which we labor, at home to local conditions and climates. Now they have to be brought from missions far to the north and are themselves strangers in a strange land; and with the Oriental lack of resource and of stamina, have to be trained, and constantly encouraged and helped. For these reasons we cannot greatly increase our native-born workers until we have a sufficient number of missionaries from America.

At our last mission meeting we thoroughly debated this subject and came to the conclusion that there was work enough in view to fully engage the time of *eight new missionaries, men and women*. When we consider the distribution of these recruits we find that there are several lines of work that must be developed if we live up to our opportunities. One is the fostering of our *outstations*, by giving them the constant care of a man whose time would be divided among them. Heretofore we have been able to look in upon them only at long intervals, and our native agents in charge have often succumbed to the temptations and discouragements of their isolation. It is very evident to us that places like Amara and Nasariyeh will always be halting, unless we can give them more of our own time.

Another crying need is for *medical touring*. What the medical work is to Busrah and Bahrein it might be to all our field. Now and again it has been attempted, but always it has necessitated the giving up of the work for the time being at the stations; and because of this we often are in doubt whether we have not lost more than we have gained, until at last we have practically given it up. But one need only look over our reports for past years to see how devoutly we long for systematic medical touring in all of our stations.

Then there is the *woman's work*, which, begun so recently, is giving us so much cause for encouragement. Our neighbors in Persia and Turkey, our fellow missionaries in Egypt and North Africa, seem more and more to be re-inforcing this branch of their work, and it is our hope that in our mission also the women of the Church will soon fill the places open to them.

We might also mention Muscat or *Oman*, with an area as large as the State of New York, which has never had but one missionary. Much of this field has yet to be even visited, and its possibilities will never be known unless we have the men to find them out.

And finally, we want at least one man ready to devote himself to reaching *the tribes of the interior*, and to open the way to the one populous district of Central Arabia, the Nejd.

In view of this need, which seems so real to those of us who have seen it, it is not asking too much, is it, of our Lord and Master, that He put it into the hearts of these recruits to offer themselves for Arabia, and into the hearts of our people to accept and send them? For ~~our~~ encouragement we know that one of these eight new workers called for has already gone out. The Woman's Board has promised to support two others when found, one a medical graduate. And the Sioux Co. Syndicate is looking abroad for their second representative on the field. Thus it does seem that before long we will be worthy of our name, and qualified, so far as numbers are concerned, to do our duty in winning Arabia to Christ.

Solomon the Wise says that "the prudent man looketh well to his going." We have looked *around* on the opportunities as they lie before us. We have looked *ahead* to plan for living up to them. Now we appeal to you, with us, to look *above* for God's approval and blessing, so that indeed we may be as prudent men in all of our "going."

## MY FIRST SUNDAY IN ARABIA.

MISS JENNIE A. SCARDEFIELD.



After a safe and pleasant journey, Bahrein was reached Sunday, October 25th, at 6 A.M. I was very glad to be at the end of my journey, and was soon seated in the mail-boat and being taken ashore.

At the landing, a bright-faced Arab met me, who spoke to me, but the only word I understood was "Sahib Zwemer," and from his gestures I concluded he desired to direct me to the mission-house; so I followed him. This, I afterward learned, was Ameen.

The strange sights on every hand caused me to realize that I was in a land without the Gospel light.

Soon we reached the mission, where Dr. Zwemer met me, and with extended hand bid me welcome to service just begun in the chapel. I entered to find it was communion service. How glad I was to be again present at this table.

Although far from home and loved ones, I was content and very happy, for the Savior at whose bidding I had come was present to grant the very blessing needed at that hour. I felt spiritually strengthened, and although I could not understand all that was spoken, I could feel that the true communion of saints was ours.

After this service, Mrs. Zwemer, Miss De Pree, Miss Lutton, Katharina, Bessie, Ruth and Raymond Lull Zwemer, gave me a most hearty and cordial welcome.

I could not feel I was a stranger in a strange land—but in a strange land with real friends.

After answering the many questions about my journey and

dear ones in the home land, we had a song service on the veranda.

In the afternoon, Mrs. Zwemer held her Sunday school in Arabic, after which I attended Dr. Zwemer's Bible-class, also in Arabic, but now and again he spoke in English, so I was able to follow the lesson, and enjoyed it very much.

At the close of this we all went over to see the hospital, again seeing sights that were very strange to me. The hospital was not far, and the words over the doorway, "Mason Memorial Hospital," made me feel grateful for such a building amid such awful surroundings. Truly it is needed here.

The day had been very warm, and in the early evening a walk on the roof of the mission home ended my first day in Arabia.

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## OUR SUPREME NEED.

REV. JOHN VAN ESS.



Prayer is the Christian's supreme need. That is an axiom in his life. It keeps him from a tangent, and gives character to his content. To all Christians alike prayer should be equally the soul's life and breath. To make people feel this need is one of the greatest and hardest tasks of the Christian minister. One would think, however, that the missionary needs no such exhortation. Still the missionary remains human. And it was just with that in mind that Mr. Thornton, of the C. M. S. Mission in Cairo, made to me a statement which I doubted then, but the truth of which I have since learned to appreciate. He said, "Pay as much attention to your own soul's need as you intend to pay to the soul's need of the Moslem."

1. Coming into daily contact with the blasting influences of such bald Unitarianism as is represented in Judaism and Islam, the missionary needs to keep in constant, vital touch with the

fountain of life or he will soon find his own soul's life drying up. With our minds we may convince ourselves of the Divinity of our Lord, and know ourselves to be firm in that belief, yet only by daily coming to God as sinners to the mercy seat, and experiencing the pardon which He grants, does the great and glorious significance of the Trinity enter into our heart life and refresh us.

2. We need prayer to make us love the Moslem. When I bring him to the throne of grace and plead for his sins as I do for my own, I forget his bigotry and even his calumny, forget his dark skin and darker mind, and love him because the Savior loves even me who am "dark and vile as he."

3. We need prayer to keep us in the Christ-like temper. It is a great temptation, in speaking with a Moslem, to try to convince him with the tongue and to let the talk degenerate into mere argument. He will conclude that you are a clever talker, the spirituality of the message will be forgotten, and since you have overcome him you will all the more depend on your own wisdom in the future. Such was not Christ's temper. His own personality He kept in the background. When men left Him, the Kingdom of God was uppermost in their minds.

4. We need prayer to give us wisdom. I am not a mystic nor superstitious as to the means of grace. But I do believe in giving the spirit of God a chance to use our *knowledge* and make it *wisdom*. In a recent talk with a Mullah I found that the same spirit which brought order out of primeval chaos, wonderfully arranged in my mouth what was chaos in my head. In discussing questions from the Koran, none but the spirit of order can help us think in an orderly manner.

5. Last and least, we need prayer to give us company. The intense loneliness which the missionary so often feels is tempered and even eliminated by communion with Him who is the best companion.

Dear friends, if we so much need our prayers for ourselves, we need your prayers for us. Ask God to be very near to us, to make us feel our need of Him. It will draw you nearer to us and us all nearer to Himself.

*Busrah.*

## DAILY WORK AT THE HOSPITAL.

MISS ELIZABETH G. DE PREE.



As our work in the Mason Memorial Hospital increases we are anxious that your interest shall increase with it, and so we want to keep you informed of what is being done within its walls.

The missionaries who have been some years on the field could tell you better than I can with how much comfort they have been able to carry on the medical work this summer, as compared with other summers, owing to our having such a splendid building to work in. There is certainly a great difference between our large airy hospital and the little room on the first floor of the mission-house, which served as dispensary formerly.

We have not had many women in-patients yet, as they are very loth to leave their homes, even for better surroundings. But we feel that we are gradually winning their confidence, and we hope the day is not far distant when they will be as glad to stay in the comfortable, attractive women's ward, as they are now to come to the daily dispensing.

From about thirty to fifty gather in the chapel every morning for the service which Mrs. Zwemer holds with them before attending to their physical wants. The chapels (there is one on the men's side, too) are very pleasant rooms, with appropriate texts written artistically on the walls in black, red and gold. There are seats, but in the women's chapel they usually have few occupants, as the women prefer to sit on the floor.

After the service is over, they come into the dispensary one by one, and each presents her card, on which is written, on the

one side, the name of the patient, her disease and treatment, and on the other a scripture text and the Lord's Prayer. We inaugurated the card system the first of October, and have found it to be a help in more ways than one. Every new patient coming in receives one after a diagnosis of her case has been made, and her presenting it when she comes the next day for treatment does away with a second diagnosis. This is quite a saving of time, for from the way they describe symptoms it is often exceedingly difficult to determine a disease. Perhaps you think we should be able to remember each case, but when I tell you that, out of forty women coming in one morning, perhaps ten or more are named Fatima, and equally as many Miriam, you will see that it is not so easy to remember just which Fatima wanted medicine for rheumatism, or which Miriam's baby needed the cough mixture, especially when they all look so much alike.

All those having ulcers or abscesses are taken into the surgery and attended to there, while the medical cases and those requiring eye treatment are looked after in the dispensary. Before Dr. Thoms left he taught Mrs. Zwemer how to operate for trichiasis, and she has since performed several operations with great success. One day when she was sick, a woman came who needed an operation for trichiasis, and Jahan Khan, our native medical assistant, said if she waited half an hour he would operate. But when she saw him, she would not allow him to do it. She said one of her friends had told her that Mrs. Zwemer had operated on her eyes, and she wanted her too, and not the man doctor. So I told her to come back in a few days, and Mrs. Zwemer would do it for her.

The work in the men's dispensary is carried on much the same as ours. Mr. Zwemer has charge of the preaching service, and the average daily attendance is about forty. There has been considerable interest shown of late, and we feel that we have every reason to be encouraged. As many as eighty-six have come to the men's side in one morning. The men do not feel as the women about staying in the hospital. They seem to like it. At present there are some very serious cases in the men's ward. About ten

days ago two men were brought in a boat from the village of Zillag, fifteen miles away. They had been shot with one bullet. It entered one man's right side, coming out at his left, and going through the second man's arm into his abdomen. The first man died shortly after reaching the hospital, but the other one is living, and appears to be doing well, although the bullet has not been located.

In "the Arabian Circle" bed is a man from Bedei'a, who was stabbed while fishing at night. He was drawing in his net, the tide being far out, when his enemy came and stabbed him, in order to take his fish from him. He was wounded in the back, thigh, and abdomen, and from the wound in the abdomen hung a large piece of what seemed to be peritoneum. We cannot tell yet what the outcome will be, but so far his case looks favorable.

In the "Lansing" bed is a man who was brought from Hassa, a town three days' journey inland from here. This man had been sick twelve days with dysentery, and was in a very weak condition when he reached the hospital. He is doing well, but is still seriously ill. Our colporter, Ameen, is in the "Van Santvoord" bed. He has been almost at death's door with what we think to have been some form of meningitis. We were fortunate in securing the services of a doctor from H. M. S. Lawrence, a gunboat which stopped here for a few hours, and we continued the treatment he prescribed. We feel very grateful that our prayers for Ameen's recovery were answered. He is what his name in Arabic means—faithful—and we would gladly keep him a while longer.

With the responsibility of such serious cases as these resting on the missionaries at Bahrein, you certainly cannot wonder that we appeal for a doctor. It was a keen disappointment to us to hear that the one we expected was not coming, and we are anxiously awaiting the news that another has been sent.

*Bahrein, November 11, 1903.*



## A RETROSPECT.

DR. SHARON J. THOMS.



Our hospital at Bahrein has been in running order just a little more than a year. When we had finished moving our scanty furniture from our previously crowded quarters in the mission-house, the boxes of appliances from London, as well as the furnishings for the beds, with the many other things sent by thoughtful and loving friends from America, were unpacked, and we had time to look around upon our new surroundings, what a long breath of satisfaction and encouragement we drew! We knew there would be lots of hard work to be done before things could be expected to move along in proper hospital order; but what a chance for expansion, and of accomplishing some of the things of which we had dreamed! We took another deep breath and started to work in earnest.

Things move slowly in the Orient. The Arabs could not comprehend this big move for a while. They had often been told by us that this large house was for their own sick ones, and that we hoped to do much more than we had ever been able to do before. But they persisted in believing that it was a new dwelling for the missionaries. Some wagged their heads and told their friends to look out for us, for we were certainly planning some mischief. One who had traveled some (had been to Bombay), said that we had a great cellar under the building, where we intended burning patients who would not become Christians.

We began with about twenty attending the dispensary. Many came to the wall of the compound, looked over to see what they could see and then went away. But gradually the number of patients increased, until, in March, the daily attendance reached

120, and we were having five or six operations in our operating-room. One half of the hospital beds here were full.

About this time a smallpox epidemic broke out, while the late rains were causing an unusual amount of fever, pneumonia and other sickness. In April, bubonic plague appeared, in a virulent form, and people were dying everywhere like flies. Many were taken with fever, and, within twenty-four hours, would be carried to their hastily dug graves in the cemetery just back of the hospital. The people were panic-stricken. Each night was a long death wail, and each day a long funeral procession. Whole families were exterminated, and the people turned to their religious leaders, or mullahs, for an explanation of this scourge.

Now these mullahs are the people who have opposed us from the beginning. They saw their opportunity, and used it with a vengeance. They told the people that they knew something would happen to the land when these Christian dogs were allowed to build a hospital, and they had seen us on the roof at night throwing something into the air, which the wind carried over the city, and they believed this to be the poison that was causing the diseases.

As the plague was confined to the portion of the island in which the hospital was located, it was easier for the ignorant people to believe this, in spite of the good we had often done them, and the kindness that had gone forth from the mission-house to themselves and their families. The people turned against us in a body. Some of our old friends did not believe these stories, but dared not come to us for fear of others. Some were too intelligent to believe these stories, but saw this as their opportunity of hurting a work they knew to be directed against their religion. As at such a time a Moslem always becomes fanatical, these were ready to join in the opposition, and the attendance at the dispensary dropped to almost nil.

The mission had planned to send a doctor to Kuwait at some time during the year, to open up work there, and we thought that this would be the best time. So, in the fore part of June, I started with Ameen and Salome, two of our best colporteurs, for Kuwait.

We hoped to gain the good will of the Sheikh by our medical work, and rent a house, if not a book-shop and house, for two years.

Kuweit was to have been the port and southern terminus of the projected Baghdad railroad, you know, and it seemed to us an important and desirable place to occupy.

We reached Kuweit harbor one very hot morning. After a nine o'clock breakfast on shipboard, we hired a native boat and went ashore, amid the usual amount of confusion and singing by the sailors. We went directly to the Sheikh's house, where we were given a cool place to rest until he should finish his noon-day nap.

Finally the Sheikh came with his retinue into the reception-room, where we, with others, were waiting to see him. We all arose until he was seated, when I was bidden to be seated by his side.

After the usual exchange of salutations he conferred, in turn, in whispers, with several of those who had been waiting with us, receiving a couple of letters from one of them. One of these, from what I saw and heard, I concluded was from our arch enemy at Bahrein, warning the Sheikh of our coming, telling him of the scourge that had come to the people by our means, and prophesying a like calamity upon Kuweit if we were allowed to remain.

After a few gruff questions about our work, our reasons for coming there and our plans, the Sheikh and followers departed and we were shown a room. We unpacked our bedding and prepared some food, for it was now the middle of the afternoon, and we had eaten nothing since morning.

Just as we were ready to partake of our melon and tea, a servant came from the Sheikh to tell us that a native boat was about to leave for Fao, a Turkish port, perhaps twenty miles distant, and we were to go aboard at once and leave the place. I took Ameen with me and went to see the Sheikh, leaving Salome to guard our things. We found him sitting in a coffee-shop surrounded by a number of the most fanatical class of Moslems,

viz., Wababi mullahs. He seemed ready, several times during our conversation, to admit the injustice of his demand, but each time these fellows had so much to say against us that he finally decided against us and sent us away. When we reached our room we found it empty, they having borne our possessions and Salome away to the boat, to which they took us by the nearest road, put us into an open boat, and we put out to sea. During the night a storm arose, and the sailors pulled down the sail and cast anchor. For forty-eight hours we were tossed about with scarcely anything to eat or drink. We finally reached Busrah, and got back to Bahrein by steamer on July 3d.

The poison story spread up and down the gulf, and our men were beaten or imprisoned, or both, at several places. But the plague died out, and a reaction in our favor came, as it has come in China and in many other fields after trouble, and the work looks more promising than ever before.

Dr. Zwemer writes that Salome has rented a house at Kuwait and is there selling bibles.

We have been greatly disappointed in our search for a suitable volunteer for the medical work, and we are earnestly praying that some young man or woman, fully qualified and strong in body and purpose, may volunteer and be sent out very soon. All of us who know the conditions just now, feel very keenly the urgent need of a doctor being sent at once.

## COLPORTERS' WORK IN OMAN.

REV. JAMES E. MOERDYK.



The bible shop in Muscat is in the busy bazaar, on a very narrow street, perhaps three or four feet wide. On each side of this lane are shops of about ten by six feet, entirely open and right upon the street, so that people in passing can look right in and see everything without entering. Our shop is quite the largest on that street. Its furniture

consists of two cases of books, two benches for visitors, a table, and a chair. The colporter also has a very low sort of stool upon which he displays copies of Scripture, and places it right upon the street front so that passersby may examine the books without leaving the street. Although we have Scriptures in some ten or twelve different languages, yet Arabic is the language usually spoken in the shop.

There are men in Muscat who visit this shop almost daily, usually with the purpose of passing the time of the day; but our faithful colporters almost always give them something to think about besides the news. One day last week we had a group studying an Arabic scroll. It was a text from the Bible, and after they had mastered it and learned its meaning, they began a discussion as to whether the text was true or belonged to the "forbidden." Two days afterward a Kathi from a town in the mountains entered, and before he left the place he had read and listened to an explanation of the commandments.

But the colporters very often close the shop for a part of the day, when they visit smaller towns in the neighborhood. Muscat has four of these towns not far away and easily visited by land or by sea. Matrah, the largest of these, is almost as busy a place as Muscat itself. It is the door or gate to places inland.

There all the people congregate, bringing their camels laden with produce for shipment by sea, and from there they return home with such stores as their own towns do not afford. The colporters sometimes spend whole days at that place, selling Bibles and talking with the people in the market place.

Almost every ship which enters Muscat harbor is visited, and many Scriptures are sold to be read upon the voyage, and eventually taken home to places where the Bible has never before been read. Ships belonging to the Royal navy are also visited, and sales are encouraging. Two weeks ago a colporter boarded one of these men-of-war and sold forty-seven Scriptures. There were sailors who asked for Bibles in English, French, Portuguese, Hebrew and Arabic.

Again, in order to know the colporters' work in Muscat town one must visit their home just outside the city wall. The door is always open to any who wish to talk with them upon religious topics, and many there are who there hear the Gospel of Christ. So many visit this house that the missionary very often makes it his business to call, feeling quite sure that he will meet somebody who, for many reasons, will not come to the mission-house. All Arab friends from the mountain country are sure to call there whenever they visit Muscat.

Just as the missionary does not confine his labors to Muscat city and surrounding towns, but claims all Oman as his field, so, too, the colporters spend a large part of their time in traveling in the mountains and districts back from Muscat, visiting the Arabs there who so much need the Gospel of Peace. There are times during the year when life in Muscat becomes so monotonous and the heat so intense that the men are glad to get out and away from the place. But we are glad to be able to write that there is a better reason for these trips. The true missionary zeal has been so intense in 1903 that not once was the missionary obliged to suggest these Gospel trips, but the men of their own accord asked for permission, and the missionary gladly helped them in arranging details.

Up to date of this writing, the colporters have been out upon four different tours. They have traveled hundreds of miles,

visiting towns upon the sea-coast north and south from here, and getting inland over the mountains and into places where never before anyone has been with God's Book. They have sold Scriptures in some sixty-five different towns, besides witnessing for Christ in other places where their books were not welcomed. One hundred and ten days and one hundred and eight nights were spent in strange homes and out under the open sky.

They have suffered hardships and imprisonment, and braved dangers many for the cause of Christ. In two different places the Sheikhs forbade them to sell any books, and special heralds proclaimed the command in the bazaars. At another place no one was willing to give them a shelter for the night, and they were compelled to sleep outside the town and in a pouring rain. In the mountains one of the Sheikhs supplied them with lodging, but placed a guard at the door, and they were not allowed to leave the house. Nor were they permitted to proceed upon their journey or to return homeward unless they paid the present which his highness demanded. When this man learned that they really had nothing to give him, the order was given to release them; but at the doors such an army of slaves and servants met them, demanding "backhsheesh," that they were again compelled to retreat, for to give that crowd money meant that there would be nothing left to get home with.

At another time they were surrounded in the way by a party of robbers, and it was "none other than God" who delivered them out of the hands of these wicked men. Soon after leaving Muscat upon their last trip, they barely missed being massacred by a band of fanatics. Tidings reached them that this band had preceded them and was waiting to fall upon them in the way. For several days they feared they might encounter it and be murdered. It was upon their return here that they learned the truth of this report. A band of men had actually gone out with the intention of murdering the party, but they missed each other in traveling different roads. The murderers, upon learning their mistake, had gone on and spent their wrath upon a small settlement, killing two of the inhabitants. Surely God has wonderfully spared our men this year.

And He has blessed their labors abundantly. Although they cannot point to any one who accepted Christ, yet they relate many instances where the seed seems to have fallen in good ground and may yet bear fruit. At one time they entered a town and had met with nothing but discouragement until they happened upon a Persian, who proved a friend in time of need. This man had read the Scripture, and then and there testified before the people to the truth of the Book and their obligation to receive it. The conversation with this Persian turned upon a sermon which he had heard some years ago, upon the text, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up;" and then the colporters embraced the opportunity to tell him more about the Son of man.

At another time it was the Wali, or governor of the town, who first bought Scriptures, and thereafter many of the people came to the men to buy books. Upon a later trip one of the colporters arrived at a town which he found invested by a party of fighting Arabs, purposing to attack a larger and walled town, from which the colporter had just come. But he was graciously received and given permission to sell wherever he liked; and when leaving the place was given an escort of soldiers to take him in safety beyond the camp.

In order that our readers may the better be acquainted with these men who work for you in bringing the Bible unto this people, I append a paragraph taken from their report, which clearly sets forth the spirit in which they go about their work—not in their own strength but in God's strength as He directs. I translate freely:

"And it happened unto us as it did unto Peter and John in Acts 4: 17, 18, and we remembered the 29th verse where they prayed, 'And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings and grant unto thy servants to speak Thy word with all boldness.' And we request that all friends who may come to know about our experiences will join us in prayer, so that we may all be of one heart, and with one voice cry out unto God that He will hear us even as He heard and answered in the days of Peter and John in Acts 4: 31."



## MERCY AND TRUTH AT THE BUSRAH DISPENSARY.

MRS. H. R. L. WORRALL.



Personally I have only assisted Dr. Worrall in operations and treated the women a few times, when there were objections to a male doctor.

There have been a good many pay cases lately, and Dr. Worrall is quite happy when he can in this way help on the support of the work. Last, year, for example, about three-fifths of the cost of drugs was paid from Busrah medical fees, and the record will be better this year. All the poor are treated free, but we try to have all pay who are able to do so.

Not long ago a boy about fifteen years of age came to the dispensary. He had been working as a day laborer on one of the ships in the harbor when his little finger caught in the machinery and was almost torn off, a bone of the hand was broken and there was much laceration. The finger had to be removed and a good many stitches taken; it has healed up nicely by first intention, although the hand was covered with black grease when he came and it seemed as if it would be impossible to clean the wound thoroughly. It was through this case that Dr. Worrall was called to treat the Sheikh over the river. The boy came from that village.

Recently the little niece of the Governor sent for the doctor. She had had several doctors, but she said that the night before she had dreamed of Dr. Worrall and he must come.

There have been several operations for stone lately. All have done well. A number of patients have come having necrosis of the jaw-bone from bad work of native dentists. Many eye

cases come too late; those who come early enough are greatly helped. Some lepers have been greatly benefited. A great many cases are fever patients, for Busrah has had more fever than usual this year; even the missionaries have had their share. But sick or well the doctor has kept at his work. The only day, Sundays excepted, when the dispensary was closed occurred when our baby died.

For the past six weeks I have been going to the dispensary every morning and talking to the women after the general prayers. It has been a great pleasure to me, and, I hope, has done them good. They are so very ignorant that it is hard to get an idea into their heads. There have not been more than three, of all who come, who are able to read. One of these, called a Mullah teacher, I asked if she could read, and she said, "No," and kept on saying that she could not. But others told me that since she was called a Mullah she must be able to read. So the next time I insisted on her reading. She complied, and several times I had her read the Scripture lesson. As she was a Mohammedan, I thought it quite nice that she should read our Scriptures. When she first came she was very troublesome, making fun all the time and trying to get the other women to laugh, but after she read once I had no further trouble with her. A number of her relatives have come for treatment, and have all heard the word, and I trust there may be fruit resulting.

Miss Miller, who was our guest in September, and who is an independent missionary, used to give spiritual talks to the women at the dispensary while she was with us. She taught them the prayer: "Oh, God, give me a new heart and Thy spirit." Since she went away I have been teaching the women, and I prefixed to the prayer, "Keep me from evil and forgive my sins." She also taught them, "Jesus said, I am the way the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." This verse I often ask them to repeat, and have taught them, "This is my commandment that ye love one another, even as I have loved you." They need this verse very much, their hearts are often so full of hate toward each other. We often hear such quarreling on the street.

One day when I was speaking about the death of Christ, a Mohammedan woman exclaimed "Jesus did not die." I was quite taken aback. I said, "Oh, yes he did, we know this from the Holy Scriptures." The Mohammedans think that Christ did not die, but that some one who was like him died. This woman has not interrupted again, but I cannot help feeling that she is criticising a good deal as she sits by and listens. She seems to be an intelligent woman, and has perhaps heard controversy on the subject. Some Catholic women who come are about as ignorant as the Mohammedans and just as unable to answer a simple question on the Scriptures. One of these women was my nurse this summer. She is a washerwoman usually, but as she had had a little experience as a child's nurse and I could get no one else, I employed her. One morning recently she was at the dispensary and had apparently listened attentively, although perhaps her thoughts were far away. The subject of my talk was "Christ overcoming the world." After I thought I had done pretty well explaining in the best Arabic I could command about Christ conquering Satan and overcoming death, etc., I turned to this woman and said, "Misco, who overcame the world?" With earnestness she immediately replied, "Satan." "O," I said, "woe to us if Satan overcame the world. No. Christ overcame the world," and then I explained it all again. I think really Misco spoke without thinking, but it seemed hard and yet comical to get such an answer after all my trying to get the idea into their heads.

They are like little children; one has to talk so simply to them, and yet it is hard to do so. Incidents and illustrations keep their attention best. One woman was quite attentive at first. Then, after a day or two, she became quite troublesome, talking almost all the time, even during prayers. I managed (with aid from above) to keep patient with her, for I felt it was Satan trying to keep her from listening, and that she was angry because I was always talking about Christ.

This morning a Catholic woman whose attention it is generally very difficult to get, listened quite well to the story of the creation and the fall. She said that she had a boy who can read,

and he had read this to her. She seemed so interested and really to understand.

Two Jewish women were very troublesome, and tried to disturb the others all the time.

We trust that the Medical work in Busrah will not need to be stopped next year, as there seems some danger it may be.

We hope a doctor will be sent for Bahrein, so that work here may be kept up.

Pray much for the work, that the word may bring forth fruit in changed lives.



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